

1. Heads of Power

Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)

Local Government Regulation 2012 (Qld) (Section 250)

Public Records Act 2023 (Qld)

Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth) (regarding taxation implications for reimbursements)

2. Purpose

This policy establishes the framework for the Aurukun Shire Council (**Council**) for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by Councillors in the performance of their official duties and the provision of necessary facilities to support their roles. It ensures compliance with legislative requirements and promotes transparency, accountability, and financial prudence.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors, including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and covers:

- **Reimbursement of expenses** incurred while performing official duties.
- **Provision of facilities** required for Councillors to effectively discharge their responsibilities.

4. Definitions

Council Business: Activities required to fulfill a Councillor's legislative and community representation duties.

Reasonable Expenses: Expenses necessary and appropriate for carrying out official duties.

Facilities: Equipment, services, and resources provided to Councillors for the performance of their roles.

Professional Development: Training, conferences, or seminars that enhance a Councillor's ability to perform their responsibilities.

5. Policy Statement

Council is committed to:

- Ensuring that Councillors are not financially disadvantaged while performing their official duties.
- Providing facilities that enable Councillors to fulfill their responsibilities effectively.
- Promoting transparency and accountability in the use of public funds.

6. Reimbursement of Expenses

6.1. General Provisions

- Reimbursements are limited to expenses directly related to Council business.
- Claims must be submitted with appropriate documentation, including receipts and details of the expenditure.
- Claims must be lodged within 30 days of incurring the expense.
- Any claims that do not comply with this policy will not be reimbursed.

6.2. Categories of Reimbursable Expenses

1. Travel Expenses

- Reasonable costs of airfares, accommodation, and meals for official Council business.
- Reimbursement for use of a private vehicle for Council-related travel at the applicable rate set by the Australian Taxation Office.
- Parking and toll fees incurred during official duties.

2. Professional Development

- Costs of attending training, conferences, and workshops approved by Council.
- Reimbursement of course fees for relevant professional development programs.

3. Communication and IT Costs

- Costs associated with mobile phone use, internet access, and teleconferencing for Council duties.
- Reimbursement for data and printing costs related to official Council business.

4. Hospitality Expenses

- Reimbursement for hospitality expenses where a Councillor is representing the Council at an official function or engaging with stakeholders.

5. Childcare and Carer Expenses

- Reasonable costs for childcare or carer arrangements incurred due to attending Council meetings or official events.

7. Provision of Facilities

The Council will provide Councillors with the following facilities to support their roles:

- Office Facilities: Access to office space, meeting rooms, and administrative support.
- Information Technology: A Council-issued mobile device (laptop/tablet), email access, and software required for Council business.
- Corporate Vehicles: Access to a Council vehicle for official business travel (where available).
- Stationery and Office Supplies: Business cards, letterheads, and other materials necessary for official duties.

8. Approval and Reporting

- All reimbursement claims must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or a delegated officer.
- A quarterly report on Councillor expenses will be presented to Council for transparency.
- An annual disclosure of Councillor expenses will be published as part of Council's financial reporting obligations.

9. Non-Compliance and Dispute Resolution

- Claims deemed non-compliant will be rejected, with reasons provided to the claimant.
- Councillors may seek a review of rejected claims by submitting a written appeal to the CEO.
- Any misuse of Council-provided facilities or fraudulent reimbursement claims may result in disciplinary action and referral to relevant authorities.

11. Related Documents

- Code of Conduct for Councillors
- Council Meeting Procedures Policy
- Financial Management Policy
- Public Interest Disclosure Policy
- Audit and Risk Reporting Framework

10. Document Controls

Council will review this policy every two years or as required by changes in law or best practice.

11. Policy Owner

Director Corporate Services.